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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed July 26, 2006.

Claims 1, 2, and 4-29 were pending in the Application prior to the outstanding Office Action, with Claims 9-21 and 24 having been withdrawn from consideration. In the current Office Action, the Examiner has allowed Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 22 and 23, and rejected Claims 25-29. The present Reply cancels claims 2 and 23 as repetitive of subject matter taught in claims 1 and 22, amends claims 1 and 22, and adds dependent claim 30, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration claims 1, 4-8, 22, and 25-30. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested and a Notice of Allowance for all claims respectfully is requested.

I. Summary of Examiner's Rejections/Objections

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, and 22-23 were rejected due to various informalities.

Claims 25-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Kumar et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,963,664) in view of Hsieh et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,011,558).

II. Summary of Applicant's Response

Claims raising objections for informalities: Applicant has amended claims 1 and 22 and cancelled claims 2 and 23, which contained redundant subject matter, according to the examiner's remarks. Office Action at 3. Claims 1 and 22, and their dependent claims 4-8 and 23 accordingly are now allowable. Applicant thanks the examiner for allowing claims 1, 4-8, and 22, and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance with regard to these claims as amended.

Claims rejected pursuant to section 103(a) over Kumar et al. in view of Hsieh et al.: Independent claim 25, for the reasons given below, is believed to be allowable over the cited art. Accordingly, dependent claims 26-30 that depend directly or indirectly from claim 25 are allowable over the cited art. A Notice of Allowance is requested as to all claims.

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III. Response to Rejections

The examiner rejected claims 25-29 pursuant to section 103(a) over Kumar et al. in view of Hsieh et al. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

First, the examiner has failed to make a *prima facie* case for obviousness. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three criteria must be met: (1) there must be a suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings; (2) there must be a reasonable expectation of success; and (3) the reference(s) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP § 706.02(j). Here, the examiner has failed to provide any motivation or suggestion to modify the references or combine the teaching. Because the examiner has failed to set forth a *prima facie* case, only impermissible hindsight remains to support a finding of obviousness, and the rejection cannot stand on hindsight. Applicant respectfully requests that the examiner reconsider the rejection and allow claims 25-30.

Notwithstanding, Applicant herein addresses substantively the examiner's suggestion that claims 25-29 are obvious over the cited art. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Independent claim 25 is not obvious over the cited art, as these two prior art references taken individually or as a whole, do not teach the "cross-fading" of the claimed invention. Furthermore, as to new dependent claim 30, each image is faded by reducing the pixel intensities across the patch in a linear fashion, as described in the present specification. Hsieh et al. teaches only that "intensity values of pixels of the first warped image are *blended* with corresponding pixels of the second warped image." According to Equation (7) in Hsieh et al., Hsieh et al. considers that intensity values of pixels of overlapping areas are intensity values of pixels of the average of two images. That is, in the method of Hsieh et al., the image is only blended, and not faded. Accordingly, independent claim 25 and its dependent claims 26-30 are believed to be allowable over the cited art. Reconsideration of the rejection and a Notice of Allowance respectfully are requested.

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IV. Conclusion

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims should be allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of the patent.

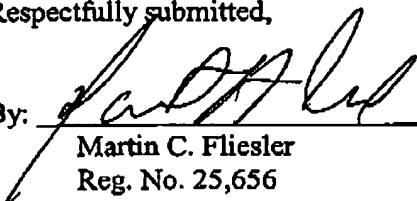
The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment of fees in connection with this communication to Deposit Account No. 06-1325.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

October 26, 2006

By:


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